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Identical letters dated 22 June 2018 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my country's Government, I should like to draw to your attention the following information on the destructive role being played by the United States, Britain, France, and certain States within those countries' orbits through their sponsorship and support for armed terrorist groups in Syria. They are providing terrorist groups with toxic chemicals, and assistance in transporting, storing and mixing chemicals with a view to using them against Syrian civilians and then blaming the Syrian Government.

The Syrian Arab Republic, which is a founding member of the United Nations, believes that the Organization can play a key role in finding solutions to crises when Member States adhere to the purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, the most important of which is the maintenance of international peace and security, which is the main task entrusted to the Security Council.

Starting with the end of 2012 (see our identical letters dated 8 December 2012 (A/67/628-S/2012/917)), the Syrian Arab Republic has warned the international community time and again of the risk of the use by terrorist groups use of toxic chemicals as weapons. At that time, terrorist groups had taken control of a private-sector laboratory east of the city of Aleppo that contained tons of toxic chlorine. On 19 March 2013, armed terrorist groups made their first use of chemical weapons in Syria in the Khan al-Asal attack. A rocket launched by terrorist groups exploded, and 25 were killed and more than 110 injured from inhaling poison gas. The victims included civilians and military personnel, all of whom were taken to hospitals in the city of Aleppo. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic turned to the United Nations alone, very early on, for assistance in investigating that instance of chemical weapons use in that town. It requested the Secretary-General to send an urgent mission to help the Syrian Government investigate the use of toxic chemical weapons and identify the party that used them. Unfortunately, as a result of pressure exerted by influential Western States on the Security Council, the Secretary-General was not able to send the investigative team headed by Professor Sellström until four months after the Syrian Government had made its request. To date, that United Nations mission has still not visited the scene of that crime. That is because of the artificially fabricated Ghutah incident of 21 August 2013, which occurred just hours before Professor Sellström's mission was set to leave Damascus and head to Khan al-Asal. The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons has also not visited the aforementioned site.

In dozens of letters to the Security Council and the Secretary-General, the Syrian Arab Republic has conveyed significant intelligence on the possession by terrorists of toxic chemicals, and operations to transfer those chemicals into Syria from neighbouring States. The terrorists have also conducted laboratory tests on the use of chemical materials in Turkish territory.

The Syrian Arab Republic has also told the Council on more than one occasion that the United States, Saudi Arabia and other States are overseeing the transfer of toxic chemicals into Syrian territory. The United States and Israel have also trained terrorists in Turkey and other States in the mixing, preparation and use of toxic chemicals as weapons. The United States also sent two American chemical war specialists into Syria, where they trained members of the Nusrah Front organization and an affiliated group known as the Soldiers of al-Aqsa in how to mix and use chemicals. In its letter of 30 May 2017, the Syrian Arab Republic informed the Council of another incident on 23 May 2017, in which two American chemicals specialists, accompanied by two others from Kuwait, brought chemicals across the Turkish-Syrian border in the Allani area near the Friendship Dam. They headed to a factory that manufactures rockets and hell cannons in the eastern part of the town of Saraqib in the eastern Idlib countryside. The factory is eight metres underground and reinforced by cement, with a three-metre thick layer of earth on top of it, and contains large quantities of chemicals, sarin gas, and materials used in the manufacture of toxic rockets. In its letter of 29 September 2017, the Syrian Arab Republic informed the Council that on 20 August 2017, several American officers led by an individual known as "Fyul Kin" (designated "Ali al-Siddiq-Abu Ahmad" by the terrorist organization Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant) transported chemical substances in three refrigerated trucks from Suwaydan and Harabish, Dayr al-Zawr governorate, to the Izzawi area south of Shaddadah, and then on to the Live Stone resort in Hasakah governorate. On 22 August 2017, the substances were transferred to the Jabal Karatshuk site in the Malikiyah area and from there to the American forces' airbase at Rumaylan. Several American chemical specialists, led by the specialist "Grund", also came in with the substances.

In identical letters dated 17 March 2014 (S/2014/195), the Syrian Arab Republic informed the Council that an individual named Haytham Salahuddin Qassab transported chemical substances from Turkey on behalf of the terrorist organization known as Ahrar al-Sham. He obtained those substances from the Dharwa Import and Export Company, located in Bolha Çeylioğlu, near the post office on the road to Kozan. The terrorist Haytham Qassab requested several substances, including, inter alia, white phosphorous, red phosphorous, potassium fluoride, methanol, isopropyl hydroxylamyl and resorcinol, allegedly to be used to produce white smoke in certain areas and then claim that Syrian planes had bombarded them. However, the primary reason for requesting those substances was to use them as chemical weapons.

In its letter of 4 February 2016, the Syrian Arab Republic informed the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism about the so-called "sarin cell". The Turkish authorities had arrested Nuhad Qassab, a holder of dual Syrian and Turkish nationality, during an attempt to smuggle sarin from Turkey into Syria. He admitted that Saudi Arabian and Turkish intelligence had asked him to transport sarin gas from Libya to Turkey. He then attempted to transport the sarin gas from Turkey through Iskandarun province into Syria in barrels packed with acid. He also admitted that he had been working with seven other people, including a Turkish intelligence agent named Mirsal Yilmaz.

What has been going on and continues to go on today is a cheap policy whereby the United States makes use of terrorist groups. It provides them with toxic chemicals and trains their members in how to prepare and use those chemicals as weapons. It then trains and prepares terrorist groups such as the so-called White Helmets and

civilians in areas controlled by terrorist groups to organize and film staged chemical attacks. Then the United States, along with Britain and France, directs the Joint Investigative Mechanism to prepare distorted reports blaming the Syrian Government. We stress that those distorted reports prepared by the Joint Investigative Mechanism contain not a shred of evidence of use by the Syrian State of chemical weapons. Moreover, the United States did not even bother to wait for the fact-finding mission or Joint Investigative Mechanism to issue any reports before launching its attack against the Shu'ayrat military base in April 2017. Subsequently, on 7 April 2017, the armed terrorist groups staged another spectacle in Duma, again at the behest of their handlers in the West, and in particular Britain and the United States. The authenticity of that staged chemical attack has been refuted by eyewitnesses who actually appear in the very video clips of that alleged incident made by members of the terrorist "White Helmets" affiliated with the Nusrah Front. Subsequently, on 14 April 2018, the United States, France and Britain launched another attack on Syria. That is the way the United States and States within its orbit — including France, Britain, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Qatar — operate. Their policy is to have terrorist groups that work with them, such as Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), the Nusrah Front, and other affiliated terrorist groups stage these spectacles, so that they can launch attacks against Syria just prior to any important meeting at the Security Council or in The Hague.

In our letter of 29 May 2018, we recently informed the Council, that the terrorist Mish'al Idris al-Hamash, a former operative of the ISIL terrorist organization who currently works with United States forces and the so-called Syrian Democratic Forces in the Jadid Ukaydat area, has been taking families from the area under the control of the Syrian Democratic Forces in the Dayr al-Zawr countryside to the United States base at the Jafrah oilfield. They have been drilled in staging a theatrical performance to make it look as though the armed forces of the Syrian Arab Republic bombarded them using shells armed with chemical substances. The training of those families began on 21 May 2018. The United States and Kurdish forces at the base plan to provoke our forces that are in position around the oilfield. It is believed that the production will be staged in one of the villages outside the oilfield.

In our letter of 29 May 2018, we informed the Council that armed terrorist groups located in the rural areas of Idlib and northern Hama were preparing to stage a fake chemical attack. Preparations and training were taking place on Turkish territory in the presence of officers from United States and other Western intelligence services, film producers, personnel from the organization Doctors without Borders (in order to avoid the mistakes that marred previous theatrics), and individuals who were brought over from Syrian refugee camps. Their aim was to blame the Syrian Arab Army and influence global public opinion.

The Syrian Arab Army and Syrian civilians have been targeted with toxic chemicals and chemical weapons, including chlorine gas, by armed terrorist groups, such as ISIL, the Nusrah Front and associated entities, in many parts of Syria. That is part of the overall pattern of criminal and terrorist acts being perpetrated by those organizations in Syria and the region. To date, we have sent the Security Council and its specialized committees more than 146 letters, with details about the possession, production and use of toxic chemicals by armed terrorist groups. Unfortunately, the Syrian Government has not received a single word in response about any action taken by the Council against the States that have facilitated the acquisition and use of toxic chemicals by those groups.

After these 146 letters in which we have provided the Security Council with details on the acquisition, manufacture and use of toxic chemicals by armed terrorist groups, as well as information on the coordinates of storage sites and the recently disclosed existence of laboratories and chemicals in the possession and under the

management of terrorist groups in Duma, Homs and Dayr al-Zawr, we are obliged to ask ourselves certain questions.

When will the Security Council investigate the information contained in the hundreds of letters we have sent it about the support, financing and weapons that have been provided and continued to be provided by the Governments of the United States, France, Britain, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Turkey and Israel to armed terrorist groups in my country, and those countries' provision to those groups of toxic chemicals?

The Syrian Arab Republic believes that after convening hundreds of meetings on the implementation of resolutions on weapons of mass destruction and combating terrorism, the time has come for the Security Council to carry out its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security with integrity and balance. We must ask ourselves, yet again, when the Security Council will carry out its responsibility to hold those States accountable for their role in supplying terrorist groups with toxic chemicals, expertise and training, and in overseeing the transfer of those chemicals from abroad into Syria and from one place to another within Syrian territory. What those States are doing is a violation of agreements regulating the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and in particular the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction; Security Council resolution 1540 (2004); and resolutions on counter-terrorism. It also undermines international peace and security.

The Syrian Arab Republic reaffirms that it is in compliance with the letter and the spirit of the Chemical Weapons Convention. Since it acceded to the Convention in 2013, it no longer possesses any banned toxic chemical substances, as confirmed before the Security Council in September 2014 by Sigrid Kaag, Head of the Joint Mission of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the United Nations for the Elimination of the Chemical Weapons Programme of the Syrian Arab Republic. Syria considers the use of chemical weapons to be an immoral act that must be condemned, regardless of where, when and under what conditions they are used.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic has conveyed and will continue to convey to you this important information on plans by terrorist groups to attack civilians in certain areas of Syria with chemical weapons and then blame of the Syrian Government. It expects the Council to take all the serious and urgent measures required by Security Council resolutions on counter-terrorism, including immediate measures against the States that support, sponsor and finance those armed terrorist groups.

I should be grateful if this letter could be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative